# THEOSOPHY

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*The revolutions of the physical world are, according to the ancient doctrine, attended by like revolutions in the world of intellect, for the spiritual evolution in the universe proceeds in cycles, like the physical one. Do we not see in history a regular alternation of ebb and flow in the tide of human progress? Kingdoms and empires are under the same cyclic laws as plants, races and everything else in Kosmos.*

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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II *The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and*

III *The investigation of the unexplained laws of Nature and the psychical powers latent in man.*

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THE THEOSOPHY COMPANY

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AUM

The golden vase which hides the secret sun is periodically drawn away for him who watches.

—*Tibetan Verse*

THEOSOPHY

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# PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY

TO ask how Theosophy may be made "practical" is virtually the same as asking, what *good* is it? The impact or acceptability of the reply will depend largely upon the way in which "good" is understood by the questioner. The philosophy of Theosophy undertakes to show that each human being is potentially the source of all good, for himself and for others. The study of Theosophy is the exploration of this potentiality, leading to the understanding of man as *cause*. Ordinary thinking tends to locate the source of the good, or of good things, outside the self, somewhere in the environment. But such relative goods brought or denied to us by the flow of events, are no more than reflections or consequences of the causes we have set in motion in the past. This is the teaching of Karma, which is at the foundation of all thought about meaning. One could say, then, that an understanding of the relation between cause and effect—which is recognition of the difference between the two—leads to the highest good in human life, for through this understanding one becomes able to act on the basis of increasingly accurate knowledge.

From a slightly different point of view, we see that this knowledge is also self-knowledge. It begins with the idea that we are cause-originating beings. From this develops the conception of one's life as a field of experience and action created by ourselves. This is the principle involved. The idea then would be to make our creations in harmony with our best intentions, in short, to improve our lives. Learning to do this amounts to learning how to recognize the operation of the law of cause and effect in all re-

lationships—those which directly affect us and those which are more remote, yet contribute to the circumstances which surround and affect us. Theosophy, we might say, charts the path of self-discovery. It instructs us in how to take charge of our lives. What does this mean? It means that we learn how, under the law of cycles, to act in behalf of the purposes we have in view. This is called skill in the performance of action.

What stands in the way? One might say ignorance, but what is ignorance? Ignorance is the inability to see the unities behind the differences in all that lies before us. Knowledge of law discloses those unities. We humans are both one and many. That is to say, we are expressions, presences, rays of the one Unity, yet we are also individuals, self-destining centers of life and consciousness. We are the same as others, yet we are different from them. In his article, "The Self is the Friend of Self and Also Its Enemy," Mr. Judge writes of the opportunity given by Theosophy to understand these differences, so that they eventually become sources of knowledge instead of barriers. He says:

> Coming down now to ourselves, it is almost axiomatic that each one's mind acts in a way *peculiar to itself*. There is a tendency that daily grows stronger after our earlier years for the mind to get into a rut, its own rut or mode of looking at things and ideas. This is of great importance. For the man who has freed his mind so that it is capable of easily entering into the methods of other minds is more likely to see truth quicker than he who is fixed in his own ways.
>
> We must then at once constitute ourselves our own critics and adversaries, for it is not often that anyone else is either willing or capable to take that part for us.
>
> Our first step and the most difficult—for some, indeed, impossible—is to shock ourselves in such a manner that we may quickly be able to get out of, or rather understand, our own mental methods. I do not mean that we must abandon all our previous training and education, but that we shall so analyze all our mental operations as to know with certainty, to easily perceive, the actual difference in method between ourselves and any other person. This is a thing seldom undertaken or accomplished by men nowadays. Each one is enamored of his own mental habits, and disinclined to admit that any other one can be better. When we have become acquainted with this mental path of ours, we are then in a position to see whether in any particular case our view is false.

This sort of self-examination and comparison is not only

difficult, but often painful. Most people are, until rudely disturbed by Karma, well satisfied with their own habitual ways. It is natural, if not good, to find ourselves irritated by other modes of thinking which lead to conclusions different from our own. So, while we may see reason in Mr. Judge's proposal for the use of Theosophy, we may hesitate to adopt it. This is an explanation of why Theosophy, which is so reasonable, is not widely embraced and made the basis of life. What will overcome this reluctance? Only the appeal of reason made strong by devotion will overcome it. The clarity of a reason eventually shames the man of mind into adopting it. He knows, somewhere in his being, that it is right. When he will adopt it is a matter that only he can decide. Meanwhile, the work of Theosophists is to spread the appeal of reason as found in Theosophy as widely as possible. The chances for others to begin to take charge of their own lives are increased by the spread of philosophy. The situation is as Demophilus put it, many centuries ago:

> The intellect derived from philosophy
> is similar to a charioteer; for it
> is present with our desires, and
> always conducts them to the beautiful.

The "good" that Theosophy does seems well described by Mr. Judge in the article we have been quoting:

> This is the psychological and metaphysical equivalent of that scientific process which classifies and compares so as to arrive at distinguishing differences in things in order that physical laws may be discovered. For while we remain in ignorance of the method and path of our mind's action, there is no way in which we can compare with other minds. We can compare views and opinions, but not the actual mechanics of the thought. We can hear doctrines, but are unable to say whether we accept or reject from right reasoning or because our peculiar slant on the mental plane compels us to ratiocinate wholly in accordance with a mental obliquity acquired by many years of hurried life.
>
> The value of thus understanding our own mental bias so that we can give it up at will and enter into the bias of another's mind is seen when we consider that each of us is able to perceive but one of the many sides which truth presents. If we remain in the rut which is natural, we pass through an entire life viewing nature and the field of thought through but one sort of instrument. But by the other practice we may obtain as many different views of truth as the number of minds we meet. When another human being brings his thoughts before us, we may not only examine them in our way, but also take his

method and, adopting his bias for the time as our own, see just that much more.

Here Mr. Judge speaks of how the understanding may be enlarged by attention to how others think and feel. Whether they are right or wrong is secondary to seeing how their minds work, for, after all, everyone is both right and wrong until the state of perfect knowledge is reached, and to understand the basis of even an illusory belief or conception is to grasp, increasingly, the state of mind of our fellows. Practical knowledge of the world surely consists in this sort of understanding, since the world itself, or its present appearance, is established by the thinking of those who live in it. If, as *The Secret Doctrine* declares, "Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities," then the "thinking" we do will be subject to that limitation.

Mr. Judge's counsel relates to our capacity to rise above the plane in which we are involved, and to regard its experiences from the perspective of a higher plane. Our instruction is given in precisely this way. As he remarks in "The Synthesis of Occult Science," the authors of Theosophical teaching "have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our every-day 'sense perception'." It is no wonder, then, that we find it necessary to strain after the meanings conveyed, trying to generate a sense of reality for ideas that are the natural currency of thought only on higher planes.

The encounter of the heart-broken mother, Kisagotami, with the Buddha provides a simple illustration. When she first came to him for help, he did not give her the simple philosophic truth that death comes to all mortals, and sometimes for reasons not easily understood. The Teacher understood her state of mind. He gave her a project to pursue in hope, while the lesson of philosophy, in the circumstances which revealed it, came to her gradually. The Buddha knew from observation and experience the pace of learning; he knew how, step by step, the truth about death—or some of it—would be disclosed in experience spread out over time. When she returned he was able to speak to her with a wisdom that earlier could not have been understood:

> "My sister! thou hast found," the Master said,
> "Searching for what none finds—that bitter balm
> I had to give thee. He thou lovedst slept

Dead on thy bosom yesterday: today
Thou know'st the whole wide world weeps with thy
woe:
The grief which all hearts share grows less for one.
Lo! I would pour my blood if it could stay
Thy tears and win the secret of that curse
Which makes sweet love our anguish, and which
drives—
O'er flowers and pastures to the sacrifice—
As these dumb beasts are driven—men their lords.
I seek that secret: bury thou thy child!"

Can the secret be told? It is found, perhaps, in a sentence in *The Key to Theosophy*: "Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend." Yet to know this secret one must learn to think as a spiritual being, and Kisagotami made one step in that direction, a step which leavened her grief but could hardly altogether remove it. From this touching story we see how a teacher uses his understanding of how others think, and how he sets his instruction at a corresponding level, so that there is the possibility of a rising to the next higher plane. One cannot really teach without this insight into mental and psychic processes. Mr. Judge drives this point home in his article on the Self:

> The attitude of mind proposed is not to be observed only toward our literature and the philosophy studied; it is to be that of every hour and applicable to our dealings with our fellow-men. It will lead us to discern the common failing of refusing to consider the thoughts expressed by another because his or her personality is disagreeable to us. Often in our ranks we can find those who never pay any attention to certain other members who they have decided cannot reason properly or talk clearly. Now aside from all considerations of charity and politeness, there is an occult law much lost sight of, and that is that everyone is led insensibly by Karmic law to address others on these topics and to afford an opportunity to the person addressed of taking a leap, so to say, out of his own favorite way, and considering life as seen through the eyes of another. This is often brought about, if we permit it, through the endeavor to control the irritation or dullness caused by the way in which the other person presents the thought in his mind. But if we refuse to use the opportunity, either by absolutely running away or by covering our minds with a hard coat of indifference, the new and bright idea just trembling into the field of our consciousness is thrown back and lost in the dark recesses of the mental plane. Or, taking another view, we may under Karmic law be the one and only person just then fitted to elucidate

> our brother's idea, and we remain still the debtor to him if we do not accept the opportunity. On either hand the result is demerit.
>
> Let us, then, conquer self in the field indicated, and thus turn the inward insidious enemy and deceiver into the friend and constant guide.

What part is played by the heart in this process of growth toward understanding? The meaning of "heart" is both evident and obscure. The language of the heart is spoken in terms of feeling, sometimes called motive-power. It was the voice of his heart that led the Buddha to seek the cause of human suffering, and then to learn its cure. The study of cause and effect is philosophy. It investigates the relativities of all things, in the light of the timeless and eternal. But it is the heart that demands this search. Without mind, the heart would remain inarticulate and impotent. Without heart, the mind would be but a calculating machine. Heart and mind working together are sometimes named *Higher Manas*—a mind inspired and a heart informed.

What can we say of the feelings arising from the heart? The classic expression is that found in the *Glossary* under "Kamadeva," which tells of "the first conscious, *all embracing desire* for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness, the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative ONE FORCE, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the ABSOLUTE." The heart's feeling is not something to be obtained; it is the primary motive of our being, although it can be misdirected by reason of the ego's entanglement in illusion, which leads to the bonds of conditioned existence. Yet that "first feeling" has spontaneous renewal, and in some there is the response of high resolve.

Mr. Judge speaks of this in *The Ocean of Theosophy*, in the chapter on Desire:

> As the old Hermetists say: "Behind will stands desire." For whether we wish to do well or ill we have to first arouse within us the desire for either course. The good man who at last becomes even a sage had at one time in his many lives to arouse the desire for the company of holy men and to keep his desire for progress alive in order to continue on his way. Even a Buddha or a Jesus had first to make a vow, which is a desire, in some life, and to persevere with the desire alive in his heart through countless lives.

And what, we may also ask, of our links with higher beings?

Have we help in the arousal of desire? What provokes or stirs in us the longing of the heart? In "The Synthesis of Occult Science" there is this summarizing passage:

> Man is a perfected animal, but before he could have reached perfection even on the animal plane, there must have dawned upon him the light of a higher plane. Only the perfected animal can cross the threshold of the next higher, or the human plane, and as he does so there shines upon him the ray from the supra-human plane. Therefore, as the dawn of humanity illumines the animal plane, and as a guiding star lures the Monad to higher consciousness, so the dawn of divinity illumines the human plane, luring the monad to the supra-human plane of consciousness. This is neither more nor less than the philosophical and metaphysical aspect of the law of evolution.

"Consciousness," says Mr. Judge, "is a condition of the monad as the result of embodiment in matter and the dwelling in a physical form." Our self-consciousness—which gives meaning to aspiration—results from the union of Atma-Buddhi with mind or Manas, and also the linkage of Manas with Kama, without which "the two higher principles *can have no individuality on Earth.*" (*S.D.* II, 241.) This is the philosophical meaning of the "Fall" into matter, the requirement of that evolution which reaches its climax in divinity. Desire, the *Rig Veda* declares, is the primal germ of mind, and that which connects "entity with non-entity," or Manas with Atma. (*S.D.* II, 578-79.)

Once again we quote Mr. Judge for illumination of what this means in everyday language. In "Synthesis" he says:

> The *Manasic*, or mind principle, is cosmic and universal. It is the creator of all forms, and the basis of all law in nature. Not so with consciousness. Consciousness is a condition of the monad as the result of embodiment in matter and the dwelling in a physical form. Self-consciousness, which from the animal plane looking upward is the beginning of perfection, from the divine plane looking downward is the perfection of selfishness and the curse of separateness. It is the "world of illusion" that man has created for himself. "Maya is the perceptive faculty of every Ego which considers itself a Unit, separate from and independent of the One Infinite and Eternal Sat or 'be-ness'." The "eternal pilgrim" must therefore mount higher, and flee from the plane of self-consciousness it has struggled so hard to reach.

The good of Theosophy lies in its promise of knowledge of the Good. Yet to see and feel this promise one must long to know the Good.

# THE NUCLEUS OF ADEPTS

THE Great Lodge of Elder Brothers works unceasingly to aid nature in her grand purpose—the perfection of man. The objective given by them to the present races of humanity is clear—to establish a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood in the world. The fraternity of Adepts and Masters is the perfected nucleus, the parent and model of the nucleus now being formed by workers for the Theosophic cause.

This prime objective is in accordance with the laws of nature. The nucleus is the center of life for any system in nature. It is the focal point for the manifestation of the hidden One Life. The one and identical essence of every nucleus is the divine, homogeneous, primordial substance-principle. As the essential nature of the nucleus is both substantial and spiritual, the manifesting nucleus has both an evident and a spiritual aspect. The atom reflects the indwelling monad, the germinal cell contains the spiritual germ plasm, and the visible sun is the symbol of the spiritual Sun.

The external aspect of the nucleus generates its like, gets old, and dies. The spiritual principles live on in their progeny. The germinal cell produces many offspring which will die, but not before the life-atoms are passed on from father to son. When a solar pralaya comes, the sun splits into millions of fragments which, wandering through space, collect and absorb materials before settling down as a planet in some higher system. Yet a portion of the sun survives in his progeny, as a portion of the parents lives on in their offspring.

The nucleus retains the inherent quality of motion and is instinct with the principle of life and intelligence. It is the "being" that directs all motion and forces in a system. From the nucleus radiate the powers which impel all its subjects to perform their respective duties, to the whole and to each other. The magnetism of the sun attracts the planets, affects their orbits, and gives the impulse of spiritual and physical life to all that lives and breathes in its system.

The perfected nucleus of Adepts and Masters is the center of Theosophical life for humanity. It is the focus for the expression of Divine Wisdom on earth—the terrestrial reflectors of Deity in

Nature called Logos by the Greeks, Brahmâ by the Hindus, and Sophia by the Kabalists. This nucleus of Universal Brotherhood is both manifested and spiritual. There is the lodge of Adepts who work on the earthly plane and there are the Nirmanakayas and Dhyanis who work in the astral and spiritual realms.

The Lodge of Adepts and Masters is a nucleus formed of perfected human beings. The nucleus in both its earthly and its spiritual aspect has existed down through the ages. The outward family line, whether called Buddha, Hermes, or Zoroaster, is the vehicle for the periodic incarnation of high spiritual beings in all races up to the seventh. The nucleus of Universal Brotherhood presently forming among humanity, extending the influence of the powerful parent nucleus, will culminate in the seventh round as a race of glorious adepts, then to serve as the nucleus that will guide the emerging humanity of the next higher scene of evolution.

This nucleus of Adepts has its chelas and lay-chelas who have earned connection with the Great Lodge, which magnetic link must be maintained for spiritual benefit to flow. Each devotee has an individual "orbit" or obligatory duty within the sphere of influence of the Lodge. This sphere includes all humanity.

A nucleus of Universal Brotherhood formed by student Theosophists has the same properties as any nucleus in nature. The influence may not be as wide or powerful as that of the Adepts, but as a center in the world it is a source of life and light for a community. Others are attracted to this sphere of influence. Each may have an individual path and sense his responsibility in differing degree. Those whose Karma brings them closest to the rays of Truth feel the strong influence of the light of Theosophy in the peregrinations of their daily lives.

The nucleus of students has an earthly and a spiritual basis. In the aspect of their temporal existence they are an association of seekers, companions, and servants of humanity. In the collectivity of their inner being they are minds striving to attain conscious immortality and union with Divine Wisdom. Both goals are to be reached concurrently, becoming one. The nucleus grows in potency as the personal element in man is made subordinate to the purposes of the Adepts.

> The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of spring, and after having themselves crossed the ocean of embodied existence, help those who try to do the same thing, without personal motives. (*Crest Jewel of Wisdom.*)

# "FORUM" ANSWERS

*Do persons remain in Devachan for a time proportioned to their previous life on earth? For example: does one dying at 100 remain in Devachan ten times as long as one dying at ten?*

*W.Q.J.*—On this the ancient writers say: "And when the reward is exhausted the being sinks back again into mortal life."

*In January* FORUM *H.P.B. is quoted as saying, "This is all the secret. Half, if not two thirds, of all our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears." In the same number W.Q.J. says, "The greater number are due to strong physical Karma" and "are entirely beyond the reach of imagination." Will the* FORUM *point out the reconciliation?*

*W.Q.J.*—It is quite true that I said that the greater number of diseases are those which are due to physical Karma and beyond the reach of the imagination rather than to the reaction of the imagination upon the body, and that H.P.B. in *Lucifer* said that "half if not two-thirds of our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination," but there seems to be no great contradiction since both statements were general, and in the last FORUM mine was declared to be in respect to a rough classification and not to a specific accurate one. H.P.B.'s expression "*half if not two thirds*" is well known to be an idiom which means much or little. It is one of those constantly used when one is not speaking of exact quantities. Hence it need not be set over against mine. But if any think it important, then let them consider that I did not say what I did as to the proportions. However, there are no statistics obtainable as to the two classes of causes for disease, and it is very evident that H.P.B. had no thought of being mathematically exact, nor was there need for her to be. Her remark was not to point out proportions but to show how strong imagination may be and how, just as I sought to point out that when the direction of the mind is altered the strain is taken off from the body and nature makes a further change, instead of our minds bringing about a state of

NOTE:—This is the seventh in a series consisting of answers by William Q. Judge to questions appearing in the *Theosophical Forum*, 1889-1895.

health. A careful glance at the substantial point aimed at in the reply criticised would have revealed nothing of the nature of contradiction between writer and H.P.B.

*In a recent discussion upon Karma a prominent Theosophist contended that at death a regular balance-sheet of good and bad Karma was, as it were, automatically made, and the resultant, always bad Karma, was what guided the next incarnation. That the product was always bad Karma, he stated, was proven by the fact that the particular Ego incarnated at all; incarnation being considered a misfortune and necessarily resulting from evil Karma. The other side of the controversy maintained that there was no such process as could be analogued to a balance sheet; that both good and bad Karma held over; that good Karma as well as bad necessitates reincarnation; and that the future condition of the Ego is the resultant modifications of some or all of both kinds of Karma. The point was unsettled. Will not the* FORUM *illuminate us?*

*W.Q.J.*—Sorry to disagree from the EDITOR, but I must on the distinct assertion that "Karma is not the cause of incarnation." The word *Karma* means "action." Each incarnation of a being is action; each manifestation of a system of worlds is action on the part of the entities that manifest. It is our Karma that brings us into whatever sort of body, in no matter what sort of environment, with whatever character, good or bad, high or low, broad or narrow. Karma in respect to things about us produces circumstances of environment, of change, for reward, for punishment, for pleasure or for pain. As to ourselves considered as moral beings, it produces from life to life a *tendency* for good, virtuous, wise actions and thoughts, or the reverse. Thus we see one man of lofty character environed by circumstances of the most painful nature, while another of a bestial or vicious character is placed where all circumstances appear to be pleasant. Which is good or bad Karma here? And what is the formula to determine whether Karma is good or bad? In the case of the good man surrounded by adversity it may well be good Karma, if so be that it strengthens him and broadens his sympathies; while with the other it may be wholly bad, since he only wallows in the mud of sensuality, thus redeepening his evil tendencies. "Good Karma—or action—is that which is pleasing, and bad that which is displeasing, to the Higher Self."

So too the balance sheet illustration is good, for it is by a balancing of our Karma that we arrive here at such and such a place with such and such a character, to experience differences of environment. That Karma which works on circumstances may be ordinarily unpleasant and thus by some called bad, but our character, acquired by other Karma, may be such as to enable us to triumph over adversity and now glean help and strength from the field badly sown in other lives by error or by mischance. So to me the discussion seems to have proceeded on wrong lines, while each of the disputants was right in his way but made wrong application. Karma is a doctrine too vast and complicated to be disposed of by set rules applied like balance-sheets to commercial enterprises; but one thing is certain—Karma is action viewed from every side and on each occasion.

*What is meant in the* Proem *of* The Secret Doctrine *(Vol. I, page 14), by the term "bare subjectivity" as contrasted with "Unconditioned Consciousness," for the latter would seem to be "bare subjectivity" itself? It is entirely comprehensible how the Absolute "Be-ness" may be symbolised, on the one hand, by abstract Space, and, on the other, by abstract Motion, but not so readily perceived how Space may be defined as "bare subjectivity" when Motion is contrasted with it as the pure noumenon of Thought.*

*W.Q.J.*—In the *proem* cited the author distinctly says under (*a*) that "speculation is impossible" about the omnipresent Principle, and then to give one way of symbolizing it—which is certainly not definition—proceeds to state that that Infinite Principle is the same as the "unconscious" and "unknowable" of European philosophy, in which, indeed, the FORUM editor takes delight. She then says it is symbolized in the *Secret Doctrine* as absolute abstract space, which one must conceive of as *space* distinct from all things existing therein; we cannot exclude this, nor at the same time really conceive of it. And in the same way, when we come to regard this omnipresent Principle from the point of view of the root or consciousness, we postulate it as being—in this aspect—*absolute abstract motion*, because consciousness has the quality of motion in it and not the quality of space, since motion has to have space in which to move. So then, having thus vaguely symbolized space, which is not consciousness, we have to say that, on the other hand, considering it as apart from consciousness, it may be said to be "bare subjectivity," although we have to use our consciousness in

order to deal with it at all. The editor's question, "Can any one conceive of abstract color?" seems peculiar, since it is not foreign to all the schools of Western thought, where many assert—as, indeed, it would appear they must—that apart from any particular motion or color we can conceive of motion and color in the abstract apart from particularization.

*Is it possible that our lower nature is composed of groups of elementary beings (sub-human) which under the higher tutelage can be welded into a force for good, rather than a something evil that has to be cast off? If so, ought not the Higher Ego to be considered a trainer and teacher of the Lower Manas rather than as a foe, even as a parent restrains his children from wrong-doing, and would not this view make the conflict between the animal and spiritual nature easier to most people?*

*W.Q.J.*—The editor is right in saying the lower nature cannot be cast off, but must be subjugated. We might as well say we can annihilate universal mind as to say we can "cast off" anything that is a part of nature and going to make us what we are. The lower nature must be discovered in all its ramifications and carefully subdued, as thus it is transformed and not cast off. But I cannot agree with him in respect to "sub-human elementals" composing us and which he calls "fanciful." They are not fanciful, even though the questioner views them in the wrong light and the editor in no light at all. If there is any point strongly made in occultism it is that we are a compound of lives, that every part of us is so made, and hence it follows that our lower nature is made of these lives. There is no vacuum in the universe void of a life. But while this is so, these lives, in so far as they go to make up man, are not to be considered as separate beings from himself whom he can "educate," as inferred in the question, from a position as man which is apart from them. They exist in him, and as he lives and thinks so he impresses on them his thoughts and acts, and as they are leaving him every moment of time it follows that a stream of these lives of many grades and sorts is continually being projected from him into space and forming his own karma. For they are unintelligent and only act in their own way, just as water acts when it runs down hill. If we regard them as beings that we are educating we will fall into superstition, but if, on the other hand, we say they do not exist and have no place in us, as the editor infers, we will never come to right knowledge of the universe as it is.

They are matter, in fact, and a certain quantity of it comes into the charge, so to say, of every man, and every one is therefore responsible for the impressions he gives to the atoms that make him up, and if he does not live aright he will have to suffer the consequences sooner or later. For these very elementals are the means whereby karma operates, for without them—considering atoms as points of sensitiveness—there would be a break and no way for karma to have effect. If they do not exist, then there is no way to make the connection between matter and mind and thought and circumstance.

The conflict between the higher and the lower can be made easy only by the old rule "to look on all parts of the universe as containing spiritual beings, the same in kind and only differing from each other in degree."

*Is there any statement in the writings of Madame Blavatsky or of any one else who might be supposed to know, to the effect that the Ego incarnates alternately in the different sexes, or at all in the opposite sex?*

*W.Q.J.*—I do not remember reading anywhere in the writings of H.P.B. a statement to the effect referred to, nor in the written remarks on various subjects by the Adepts who sent her into the world can there be found, as far as my recollection goes, a declaration to the effect that the Ego incarnates alternately in male and female bodies. There may be found the doctrine that by this time in our evolution the egos now in human bodies have been through every sort of experience and both sexes, but that does not support the inference that such incarnation as to sex is alternated regularly —nor does it refute. It simply has nothing exactly to do with the question.

The question, it seems, is interesting to many, but I must confess an entire lack of interest in it. If my next birth shall be in the body-female, it is a matter of indifference. It is of record that an ego did very well in the body called Helena P. Blavatsky; and, contrarywise, another did well in a body-male called Sankarachariah. It is said that one Maji—a woman—in India is a great Yogi also. So, as I am perfectly indifferent, my remarks may be concluded to be uncolored by the partisanship of sex, so clear to some and so often productive of clouds over vision.

Well, then, I do not adhere to the alternating theory. It is too

cut-and-dried at the very first impression. Further it appears to violate, with the appearance of a personal director behind it, the natural conclusion to be drawn from human life and character—our only guide in such matters. If we assume an anthropomorphic God, who made it a law that every ego should now have male and next female form for living in, no matter how the laws of tendency of attraction and repulsion work in other directions, there might be some probability of sustaining the position that regular alternation of sex is the rule. But the universe is governed by law, not by caprice. Let us, then, look for a moment at one or two points.

Karma—from other lives—determines where, how, and when we shall be born. But in the matter under debate, one of the ramifications of the law of Karma which must have most to do with this is *tendency*. In other words, the tendency set up in a prior life will determine the tendency toward a particular family next birth. And we must look also at the question of male and female character essentially, and not as a mere question of appearance or function. If we discover what is the essential distinguishing characteristic of the female character as opposed for comparison to the male, then we can perhaps arrive at a probable conclusion —though, as I above remarked, a very uninteresting and useless one in any event.

Now to my limited vision the female character is *per se* concrete; that is, its tendency in thought, speech, and act is toward the concrete; while the male character seems to me to be *per se* the opposite. The Kabalists and the ancients of all lands may not stand as authority for my readers, but they support this view. And the existence of exceptions in both sexes does not contradict the opinion, but rather goes to sustain it, forasmuch as we so easily recognize a woman who has a man's character or a man who has a woman's. The difference was not invented by tyrannical men, but seems actually to exist in the race. For no matter where you go, or how civilized or barbarous, modern or ancient, your examples are, they ever show the same differences and characteristics.

And whether you admit or deny the particular description by *concreteness* and *abstractness*, it still remains true that the essential female character—whatever be the distinguishing mark—is totally different from the essentially male one.

Now, then, if Ego (A) has evolved with infinite pain and many lives the female character, is it likely that that *tendency* will ex-

haust itself at once? Or if it has been set up by one life, is it likely to exhaust at death so as to permit the next incarnation to be in the opposite sex? I think not. It might be that the Ego could, as man in prior life, incarnate next as woman, but that would mean that he had set up a tendency to whatever is the essential character of the female—in my opinion, concreteness of thought in the depths of his nature—or for other of many reasons. It is not wise to set down such fixed and iron rules. Nature does not thus work. She is always about to break some rule we have foolishly thought to be of eternal duration. So I conclude on this that the Ego will go on as woman or man just so long as its deeper nature is of the same cut, fashion, and tendency as the particular sex in general in which it incarnates. For my poor judgment, the regular alternation theory is wholly without foundation. But, after all, it is a question none of us can decide. The Christian Apostles decided female incarnation to be lower in scale than male when they said women are saved only by marriage, but even some Christian Theosophists may reject the Apostles on this.

*What is Imagination, and what are its limits? Often, I see mental pictures of myself and others, acting, talking, etc. Sometimes these pictures are realized, sometimes not. Where is one to draw the line?*

*W.Q.J.*—In my opinion *imagination* is exactly what it imports on its face, that is, the *image-making power* possessed surely by man, and inferred in brute creation. It was so defined by the ancient occultists and by the hermetic philosophers. But nowadays it is given a low place generally, yet has been raised to slightly greater eminence by the Metaphysical Healers who have stumbled unknowingly on a great law. That which is often called *imagination* is, in fact, only fancy, or the idle creation of images whose tenure of life is short. But conscious exercise of this power raised to its highest degree is one of the necessities of occult art, for no occult feat can be performed without it. Experiments in mesmerism for a century, and lately those in hypnotism, show that each person has the power to create an image about himself which is perfectly objective to the inner senses of the seer. This creation is done by the use of imagination solely. If the image be indefinite, owing to the imagination not working strongly, the seer or subject will only see indefiniteness, because the subjective picture was badly constructed. But the constructor, poor or good, was the imagination. The Indian fakir makes you see the snake or other object—though

you have all your senses—because through centuries of heredity and years of training his imagination has been put into such order that it sees before it the form so vividly that you perceive, as you suppose, an objective reality when none in fact exists. And turning to the letters from Adepts to Mr. Sinnett, we find them saying that in order to precipitate a note they must see (in imagination) each and every letter complete and unwavering before they can precipitate the material elements through that matrix upon the paper. So not only have we the testimony of all the mystics, but also that of those Adepts who in later days have shown those things to some.

As to drawing the line for the questioner. That can hardly be done. For if he is a clairvoyant partial or wholly, then he sometimes sees the pictures of what we improperly call the future. For there is no future; it is all now. In such seeing he does not use imagination. But where vain day-dreams interpose, then he is either using his fancy, or is bringing forgotten combinations of thought, or is being influenced for the moment by the fleeting thoughts of another. Jno. Geo. Gichtel once saw come out from heaven the hand of a widow who desired to marry him, and then a voice saying, "You must have her." He knew then that his stray thought and imagination had momentarily thrown a picture before his inner sense. That had but little to do with his imagination.

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## "Epiphenomena"

Actually, of course, consciousness is the *only* thing of which we have direct evidence, and to say "I *think* therefore I am" is a statement which rests more firmly on direct evidence than the behaviorists' formula "I *act* therefore I am." After all, it is only because man is conscious that he can know or think he knows that he acts. What he minimizes really comes first and on it everything else rests. What the mechanist disparagingly calls "the subjective" is not that of which we are least, but rather that of which we are *most* certain. How, one may add, can the consciousness be dismissed as an epiphenomenon when only by virtue of this epiphenomenon could it be perceived to be an epiphenomenon—or anything else.

—Joseph Wood Krutch

# THE NATURAL PERFECTIONS

This is its touch upon the blossomed rose,
The fashion of its hand shaped lotus-leaves;
The ordered music of the marching orbs.
It makes in viewless canopy of sky;
In deep abyss of earth it hides up gold,
Sards, sapphires, lazuli.

—*The Light of Asia*

THE instruction of nature is a constant companion of the observant man. No one can read the works of great naturalists without marvelling at the wisdom they distill from the world of living forms, from the habits of flowers and beasts, and from the organic intelligence of the human body. There is a magic serenity in the processes of nature, a beauty without vanity, a kind of motiveless practice of the virtues which shames the human race, even while affording inspiration.

Nature, one might say, is an endless array of relative perfections. Even in the disorder of the forest floor, the unmistakable rightness of all creates a simple majesty. The carpet of leaves decaying into humus, the fungus attacking the dead stump, the myriad population of small insects which live on the death of the forest while preparing the soil for new growth—together these things establish a balance which the visitor recognizes as having the sanctity of life, and which he longs to leave undisturbed.

Then there is the presence of man in a natural environment. Man need not be an invader of the temple of natural life, and sometimes is not. The attractions felt by men for simple pastoral scenes, blending the life of man with the life of nature, seem somehow a recognition that one may share in the perfections of nature, and that his presence may be conceived as some sort of climax in the natural landscape. The figure of man remains, however, a mute symbol of some additional or higher intelligence, having a matrix in nature, yet with hidden purposes which reach beyond. A man meditating in the forest, or peering out to sea—what is his role? Yet the pictorial fitness of the idea is confirmed by an æsthetic satisfaction.

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NOTE:—This article is reprinted from THEOSOPHY, Vol. 44.

How man violates nature and trades on her secrets, despoils her beauty and caricatures her joys—this is another tale, the telling of which has other purposes. Here, let us consider the various human perfections, since they, too, exist, and share with the natural world the power of instruction.

The work of the artist encompasses a perfection in the mastery of form and the skill of representation. The artist has capacity for the sure stroke of creation. The envy of the unskilled for what the artist is able to do—and of his natural pleasure in doing it—is like the child's uncomplicated reverence for the competence and ability of his parents. The artist is possessed of a kind of yoga; art may have many levels, with subtleties not reached by all, but there is an appropriate excellence for each area of creation, and therefore a true perfection may exist in every case. The artist and his work are precious to us for the instruction afforded in what perfection—however small or limited—really consists in, and what are its fruits. Even though the true artist can never be finally satisfied with his work, but longs to square the circle in his own way—just as every man seeks to press his actions into the timeless order of reality—mastery of his tools and materials frees him to dream of aspiration. And then, perhaps, he may feel the reproach of the unambitious beauty of the natural world, and turn to record the contentment of the living forms about him, if only as a still memorial to the restlessness so often felt within.

The artist or craftsman serves as an irreplaceable symbol of the strivings of the inner life. It is not by accident that the great craft of Masonry provided forms for a fraternity of men devoted to high principles. Everywhere in the visible world may be found the signature of invisible things and the sure instinct of great teachers has made them use the vocabulary of symbolism to convey ideas which could hardly be spoken in words.

Yet symbolisms have always to be converted into transcendental meanings. The entire speech of finite perfections is like sight of a natural world from afar. It contains the secret of life, but the secret remains hidden. The lilies of the field are patient chalices of natural glory, yet how can a man be patient without accepting a like confinement that restricts his enterprise? The lilies teach, but they also mock. And if the artist bears a lamp of lunar brilliance, mirroring the divine fire, is not his still only a reflected flame? Tolstoy loved and learned from the peasants, but he could not be

a peasant. He had to suffer on as a man unable to evade the pitiless light of his own self-consciousness.

Surely, we expect too much of life. Who can join the tribe of Prometheus without experiencing the ordeal that is a part of the Promethean career? The man who wants the wisdom of Odin must be willing to offer an eye in exchange. It is this, perhaps, that we learn so bitterly, wanting and wasting, declaring our devotion, yet shrinking from uncertainty, from the dark abyss which hides the true connection between the world of nature and the world of man.

Where, then, is the place of contentment? Contentment is for what is, the restless surge of intention for what will be. Days spent in longing and nights in self-reproach are involuted denials of the very processes of life. Who will whisper to the rocks to spring up and be free, or call upon the winds to cease their blowing? They are what is. The genius is the medium of his mode of expression, a captive of the muse, and we may deplore his captivity, but never forget the completeness of his devotion.

Can a man serve the formless spirit, the protean presence which defies every confinement, with the same intensity? If not, then he had better restrain his criticism of those who practice more perfectly the lesser arts.

With patience, it is possible to acquire the dignity worn by a shabby man who does not feel himself changed to a lesser being by his poverty. It is more difficult to learn patience with a mean and shabby spirit, yet who can escape this need? The world is lightened by people who walk content, who cannot feel the ignominy heaped upon them by circumstances, whose lives are a testament to possibilities rather than conditions. Can a disciple of the doctrine of the heart do less?

The world is infinitely rich in the instruction of this sort of learning. Not a soul exists but has some kind of perfection to display, some excellence of mind or body, though it be only a common human endowment. This day the visible perfection is one thing, tomorrow it may be another. We know nothing of the stars of our fellows, nor what they are really about when they cross our paths.

# *letters • questions • comment*

*What is the relationship of one "sense" to another? I have read that some people have "heard" colors and "seen" sounds. Is this possible?*

Yes, it is possible. In rare instances people *do* "hear" colors and "see" sounds. In her article "Occult or Exact Science?" H.P.B. gives examples of this phenomenon, among them, one of special interest:

> Some forty years back, I knew a child—a little girl of seven or eight—who very seriously frightened her parents by saying:
>
> "Now, mamma, I love you. You are good and kind to me today. Your words *are quite blue*". . .
>
> "What do you mean?". . . asked the mother.
>
> "Your words are all blue—because they are so caressing, but when you scold me *they are red* . . . so red! But it is worse when you fly in a passion with papa for then they are orange . . . horrid . . . like that.". . .
>
> And the child pointed to the hearth, with a big roaring fire and huge flames in it. The mother turned pale.
>
> After that the little sensitive was heard very often associating sounds with colours. The melody played by the mother on the piano threw her into ecstacies of delight; she saw "such beautiful rainbows," she explained, but when her aunt played, it was "fireworks and stars," "brillant stars *shooting pistols*—and then bursting." . . .
>
> The parents got frightened and suspected something had gone wrong with the child's brain. The family physician was sent for.
>
> "Exuberance of childish fancy," he said. "Innocent hallucinations . . . Don't let her drink tea, and make her play more with her little brothers—fight with them, and have physical exercise. . . ."
>
> And he departed.

To see words or hear colors is abnormal, or, rather, "premature," in the present cycle of human development. Preoccupation with the material world "out there" is normal in the midpoint of the Fifth Root Race, producing the appearance of distinct separation in all things.

Our senses are our contact with the physical world; they are channels for experience. "Matter has extension, color, motion

(molecular motion), taste, and smell, corresponding to the existing senses of man." (*S.D.* I, p. 251.) Very little can be ascertained from touch, sight, hearing, taste or smell alone. The *mind* blends the impressions transmitted to it from the brain and thus forms the physically "known" world. In reality, there is but *one* sense—the power to perceive, and the ramifications of this power result in the senses, or the capacity to perceive the characteristics of matter.

As the Universe cyclically unfolds, it gradually develops, one by one, the elements: Ether, Fire, Air, Water and Earth. Each element is a particular differentiation of substance and there is a corresponding sense. Through the process of evolution each element adds its characteristic to the ones already developed. (See *S.D.* II, p. 107.) The senses, it seems, should not be thought of as separate in the way we discern their corresponding bodily organs. Three-dimensional space belongs "but to one attribute of matter—extension." (*S.D.* I, p. 251.)

Only during the present cycle, the Fourth Round, are we embedded and engrossed in the densest matter wherein all things are displayed through *extension*, thus having the appearance of separateness. Everything is in motion. The various frequencies of motion—called vibrations—provide the distinctions which are detected by the senses. "It is the sound which produces the color. . . . By correlating the vibrations of a sound in the proper way a new color is made." (Judge Pamphlet 10.) In this instance, there is reference to the powers of an Adept, but it illustrates the interrelations of life in the illusory world of our senses. The "non-separateness" of our senses can be imagined if we think of water—it can be warm, salty or colored, yet is one body of water.

"*Mental* correlations of the two senses of 'sight' and 'hearing'. . . means: simply—*a cyclic return of human organisms to their primitive form* during the 3rd and even the 4th Root Races." ("Occult or Exact Science?") In the corresponding races of the upward cycle, the later fifth and sixth Root Races, we may suppose that the seeing of sounds will be a normal, consciously controlled mode of perception. In our time, however, such occurrences are only harbingers of the future and may baffle those hoping for explanation.

*Can we gain knowledge without self-induced and self-devised effort? If not, what does "revelation" mean?*

Every time we have a sudden insight; every time we immediately understand something we have not grasped before, we have a "revelation." One definition of revelation is, "The disclosure of something not before realized." More than mere disclosure is needed, then, otherwise a "revelation" would be little more than an uncovering of a vision to the senses. Just as no one can dream for us, no one can experience a revelation for us, but many religions have been based upon the acceptance of *another's* revelation.

Quakers and Mormons, for example, founded their ideas upon the "holy" visions, voices, and blinding lights seen by George Fox and Joseph Smith. They convinced others of the reality of their psychic experiences and religions were born.

Theosophy indicates that such visionaries, moved, perhaps, by a powerful longing for help and inspiration, are generally of a pure and deeply religious nature. Such an one, by the *energy of his devotion*, might receive an impulse from the higher Mind (Buddhi-Manas) and would then feel and "see" his own spiritual nature. Such intuitions and visions, however, must be sifted through the lower mind and brain where they are interpreted in the images of previously held beliefs, thoughts or religious ideas. In such cases, the personal God-idea would always tend to distort a true vision. So the question that needs answering is, "What does the vision or 'revelation' mean?"

A vision may be misleading or it may contain elements of truth. Revelation, it may be said, is only of value when there is a conscious use of the will in focusing the mind. The search for "meaning" requires the mind to grasp the impressions its receives, to relate them to what is already known and realized. The inner principles of man constitute the various powers, faculties, and functions of the mind. The use and control of the powers of mind are fundamental to evolution, for the mind is the *power* to think. Without effort it will fly in any and all directions. Something of what is entailed in developing the proper use of the mind is related by Mr. Judge in his article, "Culture of Concentration." He says that concentration includes our entire nature and this involves the bringing into focus the attention upon the thing to be known *while at the same time drawing upon the knowledge that lies within*:

> When concentration is perfected, we are in a position to use the knowledge that is ever within reach but which ordinarily eludes us continually. That which is usually called knowledge

is only an intellectual comprehension of the outside, visible forms assumed by certain realities. (Pamphlet No. 11.)

The conscious states of each human being are influenced for good or ill by his inner nature, affecting his ability to evaluate sensory perceptions from whatever source. The qualities of a "revelation," then, are *effects* reflecting the conditions of the inner sheaths of the soul. Our powers of thought and discernment are constantly diminished and warped by an undisciplined mind functioning through the inner nature. Mr. Judge writes further on the importance of concentrated effort:

> There must be in us a power of discernment, the cultivation of which will enable us to know whatever is desired to be known. That there is such a power is affirmed by teachers of occultism, and the way to acquire it is by cultivating concentration. . . . It is generally overlooked, or not believed, that the inner man who is the one to have these powers has to grow up to maturity, just as the body has to mature before its organs fulfill their functions fully.

Only the forms we use are mortal. The innumerable "lives" that compose the structures of all beings are imperishable. Under the law of cycles there is a periodic reorganization—this is called death and rebirth. The appearance and personality change with each incarnation, yet the "lives" used for the weaving of the fabric of our outer and inner bodies have been drawn as if from a reservoir to be used again by the intelligences that have given them their particular tendencies in past cycles of embodiment. There is no loss of any previous effort, nor is there any special favor for the lazy. If one is intuitive and appears to gain knowledge as a "revelation," it is because he has an instrument he uses well, one that he has earned by "self-induced and self-devised effort."

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The infinite Here is rolled into space.

The eternal punctual Now, into successive time.

And the divine, eternal, and round life of True Being becomes evolved and extended, and rolled out, as it were, into successive history.

—*The Dream of Ravan*

# *on the lookout*

*Secret Teachings of Jesus*

An article by Elaine Pagel about the Nag Hammadi Gnostic texts discovered in an earthenware jar in Upper Egypt in December, 1945, published in the *New York Times* for last Nov. 27, recalls H.P.B.'s prediction in *Isis Unveiled* (at the end of the first chapter) that "papyri and parchments of inestimable importance will turn up in the hands of men who pretend to have unrolled them from mummies, or stumbled upon them in buried crypts." There were fifty-two ancient papyrus texts found at Nag Hammadi, Miss Pagel says (she has written a book about them), including "gospels and other secret writings attributed to Jesus and his disciples." They are all Coptic translations from Greek originals, some dating from the beginning of the Christian Era.

*"Divine Within the Human"*

Students familiar with what is said of the Gnostics in the second volume of *Isis* will find this writer's account of the contents of these texts of particular interest:

> These so-called gnostic writings describe many of the people and events found in the New Testament but from a strikingly different perspective. They suggest that the early church, far from the united body that we have assumed it to be, was deeply split from the beginning; that many followers of Jesus were not in agreement on the facts of his life, the meaning of his teachings, or the form that the church should take. From such texts as "Gnostic Gospel of Philip" we learn that some gnostic Christians denied that Jesus returned in the flesh and appointed Peter as his successor. The "treatise on Resurrection," discovered at Nag Hammadi, offers instead a symbolic interpretation of resurrection as "the revelation of what is, and the transformation of things and a transition into newness." From other texts we learn that other gnostics challenged the authority of priests and bishops and believed instead in the presence of the divine within the human.

*Gnostic "Heretics"*

The gnostics, Miss Pagel explains, regarded themselves not as "heretics" but as "Christians who possess knowledge (*gnosis*) of

Jesus' secret teaching—knowledge hidden from the majority of believers." In *Isis* (II, 324) H.P.B. calls the Christian Gnostics Essenes and "pure *Christists*" who "believed and were those who best understood what one of their own brethren had preached." Today, Miss Pagel says:

> The discovery of their writings demonstrated that what we call Christianity and what we identify as Christian tradition actually represents only a small selection from among dozens of others. Who made that selection and for what reasons? What made these gnostic writings so dangerous? Now, for the first time, we have opportunity to find out; for the first time the "heretics" can speak for themselves.

*Gnostic Versus Orthodox Belief*

That they were indeed held to be "dangerous" is evident from their misrepresentation and persecution by the shapers of orthodoxy. H.P.B. takes up the cudgels in their behalf, saying:

> We do not mean to take upon ourselves to defend the sects which inundated Europe at the eleventh century, and which brought to light the most wonderful creeds; we limit our defense merely to those Christian sects whose theories were usually grouped under the generic name of *Gnosticism*. These are those which appeared immediately after the alleged crucifixion, and lasted till they were nearly exterminated under the rigorous execution of the Constantinian law. . . .

Pages of exposition follow, giving the original teachings of Christianity—those of the Gnostics—with exposure of their orthodox enemies as falsifiers of both religion and history. Elaine Pagel says in her *Times* article:

> Gnostic Christians undoubtedly expressed ideas that the orthodox abhorred. Yet orthodox Christianity, as the apostolic creed defines it, contains some ideas that many of us today might find even stranger. The creed requires, for example, that Christians confess that God is perfectly good and yet created a world that includes pain, injustice and death; that Jesus of Nazareth was born of a virgin mother; and that, after being executed by order of the Roman procurator, Pontius Pilate, he arose from his grave "on the third day."
>
> Why did the consensus of Christian churches not only accept these astonishing views but also establish them as the only true form of Christian doctrine?

*"Who Is Jesus?"*

The writer suggests that the religious debates of that time—"questions of the nature of God, or of Jesus"—had an effect on

the development of Christianity as an "institutional religion" and that the gnostic beliefs did not support the intentions of the rising Christian establishment. As Miss Pagel puts it:

> In simplest terms, ideas that bear implications contrary to that development come to be labeled as "heresy"; ideas that implicitly support it become "orthodox."
>
> It is the winners who write history—their way. But the discoveries at Nag Hammadi reopen fundamental questions: How is one to interpret the resurrection? What about women's participation in priestly and episcopal office? Who is Jesus, and how does he relate to the believer? What are the affinities between Christianity and other world religions? Today we can read the gnostic gospels not merely as "madness and blasphemy" but, as many Christians in the first centuries experienced them, as a powerful alternative to what we know as orthodox Christian tradition. Only now are we beginning to consider the questions with which they confront us.

Elaine Pagel's book is titled *The Gnostic Gospels* and published by Random House.

*"Neo-Pantheism"?*

A recent meeting of the National Council of Churches prompted a *Science* (Jan. 25) reporter, Constance Holden, to say that "human dependence upon the fragile biosphere" could well cause the religious movements of the 1980's to look like *neo-Pantheism*. The National Council of Churches sponsored the meeting on "Religion and Energy in the 80's" for "religiously concerned individuals." Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox and Jewish faiths were represented. The speakers focused on the energy crisis, declaring the need for a "new theology," one that promotes the values of conservation and renewable energy sources. A Protestant remarked that many Christians still regard the earth as unimportant since "it is only a temporary stop on the way to heaven." A rabbi said that we need to "create the kind of theology that makes us responsible custodians of limited resources," while a Catholic representative felt that "if we are seeking energy modes that fill human needs, conservation and renewable energy are desirable because they provide more employment than capital-intensive energy sources." The *Science* writer summed up, saying that "the theme predominating in these talks was that when God gave man "dominion over earth, He did not mean man was supposed to 'dominate' and gobble everything up." She said the church groups also made it clear that *ecological justice* is now part of their mission.

*H.P.B. on Pantheism*

Ecological justice does imply the need for greater knowledge, whether or not this can be supplied by some sort of "neo-theology." The *Science* writer's suggestion of neo-Pantheism seems more to the point. The difficulties resulting from the separation of Deity from nature are repeatedly noted in *The Secret Doctrine*, and early in Vol. I (p. 6) H.P.B. wrote: "It is hoped that during the perusal of this work the erroneous ideas of the public in general with regard to Pantheism will be modified." She explained how the first Karmic effect of abandoning a philosophical and logical Pantheism, replacing it by a "merciful father in Heaven," was locating the *Devil* in nature, remarking that by this degradation of nature, man degraded himself. (*S.D.* I, 412.) The seeing of every "bush, tree or stone" as *a* God was also a corruption of Pantheism, the result of the materializing, separative human mind. She also said:

> Pantheism *may* be "physically *rediscovered*." It was known, seen, and felt by the whole of antiquity. Pantheism manifests itself in the vast expanse of the starry heavens, in the breathing of the seas and oceans and the quiver of life of the smallest blade of grass. Philosophy rejects one *finite* and *imperfect* God in the universe, as the anthropomorphic deity of the monotheist is represented by his followers. . . . and therefore cannot imagine a universe *outside* that Deity, or the latter absent from the smallest speck of animate or inanimate substance. (I, 533.)

*Theosophical "Ecology"*

The fundamental respect for Nature inspired by Theosophy is well and simply expressed in Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, in Chapter VIII:

> What then is the universe for, and for what final purpose is man the immortal thinker here in evolution? It is all for the experience and emancipation of the soul, for the purpose of raising the entire mass of manifested matter up to the stature, nature and dignity of conscious god-hood. The great aim is to reach self-consciousness; not through a race or a tribe or some favored nation, but by and through the perfecting, after transformation, of the whole mass of matter as well as what we now call soul. Nothing is or is to be left out.

*Forerunner of Atlantean Karma?*

Russia and the United States are in a race to develop "laser weapons that many experts believe could transform warfare on the

ground and in outer space in the next decade," according to a *New York Times* dispatch printed in the *Long Beach Independent Press-Telegram* (Feb. 10, 1980). Apparently, billions of dollars have already been spent on the development of laser weapons, and the program is now being accelerated:

> A laser is a device that generates a nearly perfect beam of concentrated light in which the subatomic particles that constitute the beam, known as photons, travel on a parallel axis. Scientists believe that a beam produced by a five-megawatt laser would be able to melt objects in space at distances exceeding 5,000 miles. . . .
>
> In theory, the laser appears as something of an "ultimate weapon" because laser beams travel at the speed of light (over 186,000 miles a second) and could be used repeatedly against different targets. A laser weapon would function best in the vacuum of space because beams can be blocked or attenuated by clouds within the atmosphere.

*Atlantean Science*

Although still in the experimental stage, such laser weapons recall the force used by the Atlanteans and named Mash-Mak. H.P.B. said in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 563):

> It is this vibratory Force, which, when aimed at an army from an *Agni Rath* fixed on a flying vessel . . . reduced to ashes 100,000 men and elephants, as easily as it would a dead rat. . . . Is it this destructive agency, which, once in the hands of some modern Attila . . . would reduce Europe in a few days to its primitive chaotic state with no man left alive to tell the tale—is this force to become the common property of all men alike?

In this instance, H.P.B. was writing about the force discovered by Mr. Keely: "the terrible sidereal Force" known to the Atlanteans, which, she said, was "by several thousand—or shall we say hundred thousand?—years *too premature*." It would seem that Atlantean tendencies are once again appearing, although their culmination may not be evident for thousands of years.

*Eclipse in India*

Students of the *Bhagavad-Gita* may have felt a shock of recognition on seeing the dateline of a story in the *Los Angeles Times* —Feb. 16: Kurukshetra, Inda. In studying the *Gita* in its philosophical and devotional aspects, one may forget that the great war between the Kurus and Pandavas is a matter of history to the Indian people. A hundred miles north of New Delhi, Kurukshetra is now a "sleepy agricultural town of 40,000 people," but still has

mythic importance to the Hindus, whose scripture, the *Times* writer says, relates that "all the gods came to bathe at Kurukshetra during a solar eclipse, a time when all the holy rivers flow into the Sannihit, home of the town's ancient artificial lakes." February 16 marked the first total eclipse visible in India in eighty-five years. The Hindus regard bathing during an eclipse as a religious duty to ward off personal evil, and if one does not bathe, the effects will extend to future lives. Bathing in the river during the eclipse, the reporter says, is held to have a "transference effect, so it helps fight the larger problems afflicting society in general."

*Living by Myth*

Dr. Lokesh Chandra, a member of the upper house of India's Parliament, told the *Times* correspondent: "We deal with our fears through superstition while you in the West require psychiatrists." He added, "We feel our way is better . . . Indians are born, live and die in myth. Myth is the true reality, and when this dies, so does India." Commenting, the *Times* reporter says that the ability to accept myth and science with equal conviction is difficult for a Westerner to understand, perhaps because of the absence of dualism in Hindu philosophy. "In Western thought, body and soul exist separately; to the Hindu they are inseparable." Drawing on the ideas of a New Delhi psychoanalyst, Dr. Sudhir Kakar, he went on:

> During the early, tentative years after Indian independence in 1947, the role of myth in modern, urban India is said to have diminished sharply as the country scrambled to emulate the achievements of the West.
>
> However, many feel that this pace has slowed in recent years as Western scholars have begun to question the limits of science.
>
> "For our first 20 years, it appeared that modernity would sweep myth away, but modernity has undergone its own crisis," Kakar said. "There is no longer the exactness and confidence in Western Science and this has helped to halt the erosion of myth."

If such changes in attitude will help to halt the Westernization of India and other Eastern cultures, perhaps more of the people will recognize the truth of Gandhi's predictions in *Hind Swaraj*, written so long ago (1908), and begin to study the *Gita* seriously, as he did.

*Nobel Peace Prize*

Alfred Nobel, the Swedish inventor of dynamite, heartsick over the applications of his invention in war, provided in his will that prizes of money be awarded each year to those who aid humanity by their work in various fields. The awards, which began in 1901, are often used by the recipients to further their beneficent activity. Included among the awards, which honor scientific advances and achievements in literature and the arts, is one for Peace. In past years the Nobel Peace Prize has been won or shared by five women, all of them pacifists who opposed war and violence. Last year the Peace Prize was again awarded to a woman, Mother Teresa, a Catholic nun whose life recalls that of Father Damien, the priest who was singled out for high praise by H.P.B. in *The Key to Theosophy*. The *Los Angeles Times* (Oct. 18, 1979) reported that the Committee gave the prize "in recognition of her work in bringing help to suffering humanity."

> Her order, the Missionaries of Charity, was founded in Calcutta's slums in 1948 when Mother Teresa opened her first school with 40 cents in her pocket and special permission from Rome to live outside a convent. The order now runs schools, hospitals, youth centers and orphanages in 50 Indian cities and in others around the world.

*Homes for the Destitute*

In awarding the prize the Nobel Committee noted that the hallmark of Mother Teresa's work "has been respect for the individual human being, for his or her dignity and innate value," remarking, "The loneliest, the most wretched and the dying have at her hands received compassion without condescension, based on reverence for man." Interviewed at her mission, Mother Teresa said she would accept the prize in the name of the poor. "Greed," she added, "is the greatest obstacle to peace in the world today—greed for power, for money and for name." With her prize money, she explained, she would "build more homes for the destitute and the poor, especially for the lepers." The *Times* writer relates:

> When the short, slight woman opened the mission's "home for the destitute dying" next to a Hindu temple in 1952, 400 Brahmin priests staged a noisy street protest outside.
>
> "If you want to kill me, kill me," she told the priests. "Let them (the inmates) die in peace."
>
> She won them over.

Mother Teresa has already received several awards which were used for her projects. While she is now a citizen of India, she accepts no direct financial assistance from the government, except for occasional gifts of land for a new venture. The quality of her service recalls H.P.B.'s observation in the *Key* (pp. 238-39):

> Had we the means to do so, we would raise a statue to Father Damien, the true practical saint, and perpetuate his memory for ever as a living exemplar of Theosophical heroism and of Buddha and Christ-like mercy and self-sacrifice.

*Foolish Claim, Shallow Refutation*

A writer in the *Christian Science Monitor* for last Dec. 5 made the appearance of one more Reincarnation book exploiting "hypnotic regression" into the occasion for pontifical comments. At the end of his review he said:

> The main point of all this is that people should not be gullible in accepting claims of the paranormal, however striking the purported evidence may seem. Its plausibility is likely to be only superficial. Many decades of study of devils, ghosts, clairvoyance, telepathy, psychokinesis (mental manipulation of objects), reincarnation, and other supernatural effects have so far failed to produce persuasive evidence for their reality.

Obviously enough, this writer has never really looked at the serious evidence for reincarnation, nor considered the weight of the philosophical argument in its favor, shown by writers as different and distinguished as Schopenhauer and David Hume. There is really no excuse for this ignorance today, especially since the well known anthology, *Reincarnation*, by Head and Cranston, has gained such wide circulation. In this case the misfortune is that another book claiming to embody "hypnotic history" should be supposed to contain the case for reincarnation!

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